



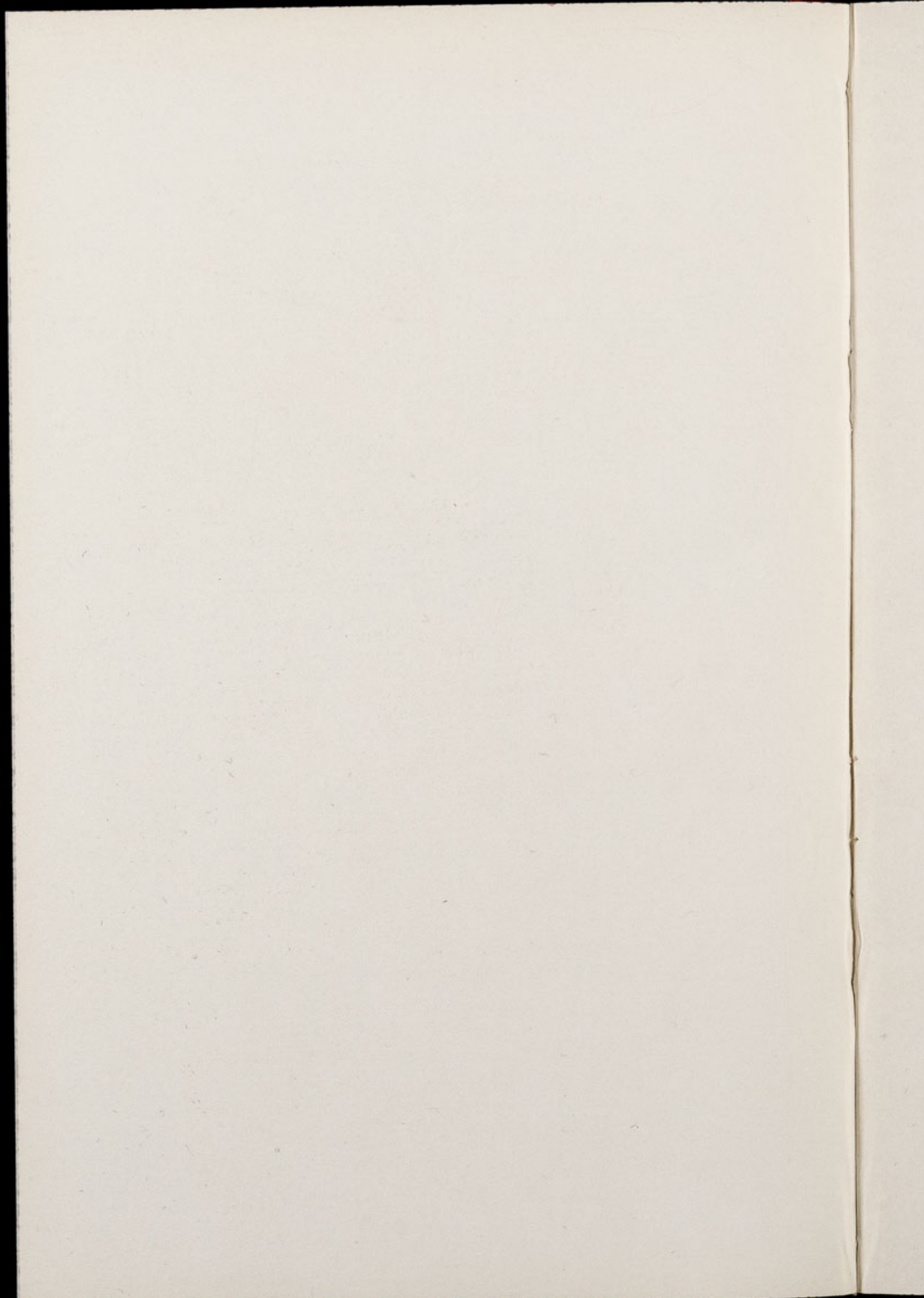
*By Courtesy of K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*

# Chester Zoo News

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON - BY - CHESTER

June, 1964

Price 1/-



## Editorial

This month, on the 13th of June, we celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the date on which the North of England Zoological Society took over the running of Chester Zoo. It is appropriate that we should open the Tropical House, the most important project ever undertaken at the Zoo, on this date.



*E. Kirkland, F.R.P.S.*

MR. MOTTERSHEAD

The Zoo was founded in November, 1930, when Mr. George S. Mottershead (our present

*Editorial continued overleaf.*

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**COVER:** *Our Cover Picture this month shows one of Chester Zoo's adult female Eland, with three youngsters born during May of this year.*

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Director-Secretary) purchased what is now the Oakfield Restaurant and nine acres of land. Mr. Mottershead had to face a great deal of opposition and a Ministry of Health enquiry was held in February, 1931. The Ministry's decision was favourable and Chester Zoo was first opened to the public during Easter 1931.

When taken over by the North of England Zoological Society, the Zoo covered a mere ten acres, compared with today's one hundred and fifty five acres. There is also a marked difference in attendance figures. During the Society's first year of operation eleven thousand six hundred and eleven visitors paid for admission to the Gardens, whereas in 1963 we had one million seventeen thousand and thirty-seven visitors.

The first aquarium, consisting of six tanks, was opened in October, 1934. It was built in the basement of the Oakfield Restaurant, largely due to the kindness and generosity of Miss G. M. Russell-Allen — who is now Chairman of the Society. This Aquarium remained very popular and it was not until 1952 that the present building was erected opposite our North Entrance Gate.

During the first few years of its existence Chester Zoo may have suffered from lack of capital, but it was always fortunate in having many good friends. Among these friends was Miss E. Holt of Birkenhead who, in March 1936, presented her collection of four hundred tropical birds to the Zoo.

The major development of 1937 was the building of a Lion House, but from then until the end of the war period new projects were limited to the construction of two Bear Pits.

In 1947 the new Lion enclosure was completed, followed by the Sea Lion Pool and a Reptile House very soon after. 1949 saw the opening of our first Elephant House and the highspot of 1950 was the building of the present Polar Bear enclosure, which was erected in memory of Miss Tompkins Grafton of Windermere, who left the Zoo a considerable amount of money.

Since 1950 new buildings seem to have sprung up almost overnight. For the catering department there have been the Bridge Cafe, Coronation Hall, Rainbow Cafe, Cafeteria, Fountain



K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.

THE OAKFIELD, WHERE CHESTER ZOO BEGAN, PICTURED IN 1964

Restaurant and various Snackbars. Numerous Aviaries, a Parrot House and Tropical Bird House were added to accommodate our growing collection of birds and the long list of animal houses included those for Giraffes, Camels, Zebras, Nocturnal animals, Apes, Small Mammals, Pachyderms, Rhinos and Monkeys. Now in 1964 we have the completed Tropical House and the beginnings of a new Cat House.

### BABY ELEPHANTS

We are more than happy to record the arrival of three baby female African Elephants (*Loxodonta africana*). "Gina" was the first to arrive on Thursday, 14th May. She showed signs of a distinctly unfriendly disposition until "Judy", the six year old Asiatic Elephant (*Elephas maximus*), took a hand — or should we say trunk — in her education. We were afraid that Judy might be somewhat jealous of the two and a half year old baby, but quite the contrary. Whenever Gina threatened to chase her Keepers, Judy stepped in and very firmly pushed the baby back. In fact Judy has taken charge of all the new elephants.

"Zoe", and "Nicola" arrived on the evening of Wednesday, 3rd June, and when all the elephants were introduced to one another the following morning, Judy was kept really busy. The thirty-five year old "Barbar" (our other Asiatic elephant) disclaimed all responsibility for the youngsters and left Judy to fuss over all three. Another baby African elephant, this time a male, is due to arrive in August.

Next month we hope to include photographs of our new elephants.

## ZOO BABIES

### Cat Section

LIONS: The Lion enclosure is always one of the most popular exhibits in any Zoo and we had hoped that there would be cubs to provide an added attraction to visitors later in the summer. Unfortunately the mother abandoned the babies born on 12th May.

CARACAL LYNX: For the third year in succession twin kittens have been born to our pair of Caracal Lynx. The latest twins were born on the 16th May.

PUMAS: To complete the trio of births in the Cat Section during the month, Puma triplets arrived on the 28th May. We expect the youngsters to be on show towards the beginning of July.

### Ruminants

SOAY SHEEP: Between 5th and 23rd May, eight Soay Lambs were born, including two sets of twins.

PÈRE DAVID DEER: The Père David Deer youngsters born during April are both males and growing rapidly. Opposite is a charming photograph of one of the babies, giving his mother's ear a gentle nibble.

RED LECHWE: A female Red Lechwe calf was born on the 1st of May.

AMERICAN BISON: The first of 1964's Bison calves was born on the 28th of May. This youngster is a male and, as is usual with baby Bison, he is noticeably lighter in colour than our adult animals.



MOTHER AND SON

*K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*

ELAND: In 1962 three male Eland calves were born, followed by two female calves in 1963. This year our three adult female Eland have again produced healthy calves. "Ruth" was the first to arrive on May 2nd, followed by "Joseph" on May 7th and "Rachel" on May 11th. Biblical names seem to be the order of the day for our Eland herd as the mothers are named "Faith", "Hope" and "Charity".

CAMEL: Unfortunately the little male Bactrian Camel born on Sunday, 17th May only survived for a few days.

### Small Mammal, Zebra and Monkey Houses

CHINCHILLAS: Twin Chinchillas were new additions to the Small Mammal House on the 2nd of May.

PINE MARTENS: Three young American Pine Martens made their first public appearance on the 24th of May. The babies had been born for some time but until then were kept carefully hidden by their mother.

SKUNKS: Another mother keeping her babies out of the limelight is one of the six Skunks presented to us by the Director of Calgary Zoo in September, 1963. Squeaks have been heard for several weeks, but as yet we do not know exactly how many babies there are.



Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby  
"JOHNNY"

ZEBRA: Another Common Zebra foal — "Johnny" — was born in the Zebra House on 19th May. He has now been transferred with the remainder of the herd to their summer quarters in one of the deer and antelope paddocks, alongside the canal.

VERVET MONKEY: The latest newcomer in the Monkey House is "Terry", off-spring of "Tiny" and "Titch", a pair of Vervet Monkeys. This latest baby arrived on the 31st of May.



"MINNIE" AND "NETTA"

*J. Gwyn Jones*

**MONA MONKEY:** The little Mona, whose birth was recorded last month, is growing fast and beginning to find her feet, although she still prefers to travel round her enclosure clinging to the soft fur of her mother's tummy. She has been named "Netta".

### **PYTHON EGGS**

Not to be left out of the baby boom at Chester Zoo, one of our African Pythons laid a total of twenty-six eggs on Sunday, 17th May. This is the first time that Python eggs have been laid at Chester following a Zoo mating — the male is an Indian Python. The eggs, which are being incubated, are each about twice the size of a goose egg. The incubation period is between ten and twelve weeks, so we are hoping that the eggs will hatch towards the end of July.

### **BELINDA**

"Belinda" was a Russian-Himalayan Hybrid Bear born at Chester Zoo on the 24th December, 1947. We say "was" because Belinda died on the 22nd May, 1964. She swallowed the top of a vacuum flask which someone had been careless enough to drop into the enclosure which she shared with a pair of Russian Bears and another Russian-Himalayan Hybrid. The plastic top lodged in Belinda's stomach, thus causing an unpleasant and entirely unnecessary death.

It is essential for the well-being of our animals that visitors should observe the **NO FEEDING** rule and it is equally important that no objects whatsoever should be dropped or thrown into enclosures.

### **MORE NEWS OF THE TROPICAL HOUSE**

Work was first started on the Tropical House in 1956 and we estimate the total cost to have been £100,000. Included in the building are the Nocturnal, Pigmy Hippo and Reptile Houses, accommodation for Gorillas and Orang Utans, sleeping quarters for the Chimpanzees, a Giant Tortoise paddock, tropical fish pools, waterfalls, Crocodile and Alligator beaches and an extensive collection of tropical and sub-tropical plants (see page 10).



*Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby*

"PETER" AND "GORDON" WITH THEIR MOTHER



*J. Whitworth*

AVIARIES FOR THE BIRDS OF PARADISE ARE ON THE RIGHT

Well over a hundred birds have been released in the Tropical House, including various species of African Starlings, Fairy Bluebirds, Tanagers, Sunbirds, Humming Birds, Fruit Pigeons, Plantain Eaters, Touracos, Waxbills, Silverbills, Mannikins, Nuns, Cocks of the Rock, Whydahs, Mynahs, Zosterops and many, many others. We are now looking forward to the arrival of a collection of Birds of Paradise.

Since the new Reptile House has considerably more compartments than the old building, many new reptiles have been purchased and presented. Again we will mention only a few — Rattlesnakes (including a Pigmy Rattlesnake), Cobras, Anacondas, Chameleons and Alligator Lizards. Perhaps the most spectacular of our new reptiles are a pair of Rhinoceros Iguanas, which are natives of Haiti and Puerto Rico.

### PURCHASES AND PRESENTATIONS

We were presented with a delightfully tame young Onager by Sir Rhys Llewellyn of London on the 3rd of June. Onagers are found mainly in Persia, Afghanistan and Pakistan and our little male — "Moses" — was caught in Southern Persia.

"Winnie", the Giant Anteater was joined by "Jock" and "Jenny", two half grown youngsters, on the 27th May and the three Anteaters have settled down well together.

The Director of Cologne Zoo, Dr. Wilhelm Windecker, presented a young male Grison on the 27th of May.

Capybaras, Coatimundis, Spider Monkeys and Squirrel Monkeys were purchases which also arrived on the 27th May.

### PLANTING OF THE NEW TROPICAL HOUSE

It is with some satisfaction that we view the completed planting of the Tropical House. After eight years of planning, since it was first decided to build this type of house, we must be excused for feeling rather proud of the results.

It has taken us eight years to assemble the vast number and variety of plants, which have all been grown in our glass nursery from cuttings, seeds, etc., collected from good friends everywhere. Many plants were acquired through exchanges with other collectors of tropical and sub-tropical plants.



G. Kerr.

LOOKING DOWN THE TROPICAL HOUSE TOWARDS THE MAIN ENTRANCE  
THE REPTILE HOUSE IS ON THE RIGHT OF THE PICTURE

In this article we will try to give a description of the plants used. As soon as it is practical and pressure of other work allows, all plants will be labelled for the interest of our visitors.

Entering the house from the main entrance — *Tibouchina semidecandra* has been planted on the wall to the right. This is a fast growing plant and will soon cover the wall with its bright blue flowers. Although each flower only lasts one day the plant is always one mass of bloom during the summer and autumn months. Further to the right we have planted *Monsterea deliciosa*, to cover the wall behind the large waterfall, also *Costus malostianus* and *Alocasias* in variety

When the pool beneath the waterfall was made, three branches were cemented into the sides, to arch over the pool and on these have been planted the epiphytic Bromeliads, tied to the branches in a mixture of *osmunda* fibre and sphagnum moss. The varieties used are *Aechmea lindinii*, *A. fasciata*, *Neoregalea carolina tricolor*, *Bilbergea iridifolia*, *B. zebrina* and *B. nutans*, also *Platy-cerium bifurcatam* — the Staghorn Fern.

On the left of the entrance is a collection of Cacti and Succulents, many of which are already good specimens from five to six foot high. *Passiflora quadrangularis* and *caerulea* have been planted against the pillars in this area to provide roof coverage at a later date.

To move on to the Alligator pool — on the rock face behind the pool, planted in pockets and hanging over the rocks are *Grevillea robusta* and varieties of fern.

Continuing on the left of the house — a long border has been planted almost entirely with varieties of *Croton*. One hundred and sixty of these were used here, mostly very fine specimens up to six feet in height. Interplanted as dot trees are *Citrus limonia* (lemon) and *Citrus sinensis* (orange). *Kentea Palms* are also included in this border, in fact *Kentea Palms* and numerous other varieties of palm can be seen throughout the House. To complete the border *Ficus elastica* and *F. benghalensis*, planted at the back, will be trained to arch over the paths in front of the reptile house and on over the wall above.

In the centre of the house is a bed containing two plants of *Musa nana*, the Dwarf Banana, which is grown commercially in the Canary Islands. These have fruited annually with us in the Pigmy Hippo House. Also in this bed are an interesting collection of tropical *Hibiscus*, including yellows, reds and pinks and *Daphne Odoro*. This latter is not a tropical plant but we felt we had to find room for this lovely, sweet-scented shrub. *Gardenias*, *Brunfelsia calycina* and one plant of *Miconia magnificum* (which we are particularly pleased to possess) fill the remainder of the bed.

Moving further into the house we come to the fountain and its pool, around which are water loving plants such as *Cyperus papyrus*, *C. alternifolius variegata*, *Colocasia antiquorum* and varieties, *Xanthosoma violaceum*, *Alocasias*, *Brachychilus horsfieldii*, *Elettaria antiquorum* and *Saccharum officinaria*.

On each side of the path rising up to the top walk, beds have been made to accommodate different species of *Begonia*, namely *Moysii*, *Bowerii*, varieties of *Rex*, *Cathayana*, *Gibsonii*, *Gloire-de-Sue*, *Luxurians*, *President Carnot*, *Hageana*, *Venosa*, *Clifton*, *Fuchsioides*, *Druryii*, *Nitida alba*, *Manicata argentea*, *Guttata*,



LOOKING UP TO THE TOP WALK OF THE TROPICAL HOUSE.

G. Kerr.

Axel Lange, Sturzii, Metallica, Undulata, Undulata White Cane, Serratifolia, Hydrocotylifolia, Foliosa, Diadema, Richmondensis and Pearle-de-Lorraine — altogether a very interesting collection.

We have now reached the end of the house and a bed planted with four *Cyathea dealbata* (the New Zealand Tree Fern), also four *Asplenium nidus* (Birds Nest Fern). Other subjects in this bed are *Asparagus sprengeri*, *A. plumosus*, Maidenhair and *Pteris* Ferns, *Draceanas* in variety, *Cordylines*, *Campelea zemonea albo lineata*, *Pilea cardierii* and *Muchlenbeckia platyclados*.

Moving to the right now and in the centre bed is a mixed collection of plants, including *Genista fragrans*, *Ixora Prince of Orange*, *lutea* and *coccinea*, two plants of *Strelitzia reginae* (Birds of Paradise Flower), *Pandanus veitchii*, *Oleanders*, *Curculigo recurvata*, *Plumarea rubra* and *Corocea macrocarpa*.

We have now described the planting in one half of the house and we will talk about the other half in our next issue.

### AQUARIUM NEWS

Recently it became obvious that some of our tropical fish were growing at such a phenomenal rate that they would require much larger tanks if they were to remain healthy. Three of our largest tanks were heated and into these we have now been able to move a number of our best fish.

The Electric Eels were the most important specimens to be moved, as they were beginning to be quarrelsome due to their rather confined accommodation. We were quite surprised at the increased size and weight of the Eels. Although we had no means of establishing their weight accurately, we estimated it to be around the twenty pound mark. This is an amazing increase as, when they arrived two years ago, they were the size of large earth worms and approximately the same weight. After the handle of the catching net had been covered with a length of hose pipe (as insulation), the eels were moved into their new quarters, without any trouble and they have since settled down very well.

Next to the Electric Eels we have placed a mixed collection of some of the larger Cichlids — Marbled and Festive — together with various Pomelodella and Clarias Catfish, one fifteen-inch Black Shark, a twelve-inch Plecostomus Catfish, an eight-inch Spanner Barb and an equally large Clown Barb. All these fish have settled down to peaceful co-existence.

In the third tank we have the well established shoal of Piranhas (*Rooseveltiella nattereri*) which have started to grow again with the advent of the hot weather.

A number of smaller fish in the tropical section have also been moved. Many of the Cichlids have been split into groups and housed in separate tanks and the Arrowanas — which have grown several inches since their arrival in November, 1963 — are now living in the tank formerly occupied by the Electric Eels. The Arrowanas have settled down beautifully and lost a lot of their former nervousness.

Six specimens of Elephant Trunk-nosed Fish (*Gnathonemus petersi*) arrived from the Congo recently and have been placed with

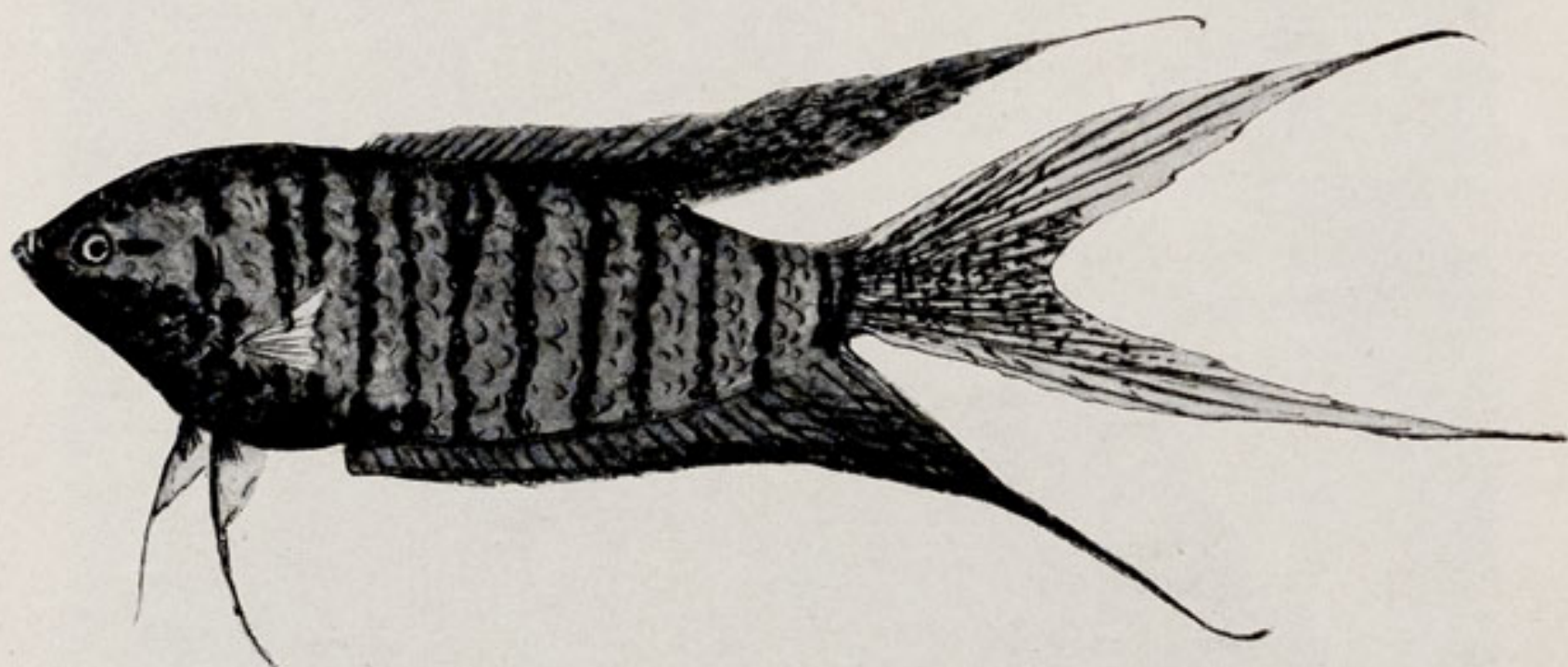


"BOKO" THE BABY LOWLAND GORILLA

*J. Whitworth*

a selection of Variegated Platy — a combination which has proved most successful in the past.

Also received this month were six small specimens of Puffer Fish — *Tetraodon fluviatilis*.



M. D. Murphy

PARADISE FISH

Among the successful spawnings this month have been both species of Australian Rainbow (*Melanotaenia maccullochi* and *M. Nigrans*), Paradise Fish (*Macropodus opercularis*) and Cherry and Ticto Barbs (*Barbus conchoni* and *B. ticto*). Several spawnings of Angel Fish were hatched, but unfortunately the youngsters were not reared. This was also the case with Ramirez' Dwarf Cichlids — *Apistogramma ramirezi*.

Fifty Sucking Loach — *Gyrinocheilus aymoniere* — were purchased with the intention of placing them in the pools in the newly constructed Tropical House — to keep down the growth of algae. As they were a little small on arrival they have all been placed in tanks in the Aquarium where they are doing a tremendous job of cleaning the algae off the rocks, plants and sides of the tanks. They will be sent down to the Tropical House, together with other suitable tropical fish, when they have grown a little.



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